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influence of light, heat, atmospheric density, and the chemical nature of the soil, in shaping the character of the vegetation.

It seems unfortunate to the reviewer that more attention was not paid to what may be called, speaking broadly, the geological relation. The short section on the transformation of edaphic to climatic formations is excellent and might well be much enlarged. In order to understand any formation it is necessary to know its history, and this history can be interpreted only by the most painstaking study of areas in which transitions from edaphic to climatic formations are now taking place. With this study there must be coupled a study of the physiographic history of the region. The study of the cumulative influence of past environments, the lagging of effects behind their causes, is still in its infancy. Perhaps it is because of our lack of knowledge along these lines that Schimper's great work deals so much more with static than with developmental ecology.

This new treatise is a distinct addition to our knowledge, both as a compendium of previously stated but scattered facts, and as a source of many new details and better points of view. Of course all ecologists must have it and must be familiar with its contents from cover to cover. This new volume is certain to stand always as one of the great botanical masterpieces. — HENRY C. COWLES.

Economic botany.

ONE of the best works yet written upon cultivated plants has just been published by Dr. R. Sadebeck.[3] While the title might suggest that the subject matter would attract only those especially interested in the plants of the German colonies, this is not at all true, since these plants are discussed so comprehensively that their relations to dissimilar as well as similar economic plants of other regions are constantly suggested. After having given a careful description of the taxonomic features of a plant, the author discusses its culture, its native region and its distribution, the varieties produced under cultivation, its useful products and the way in which these are utilized as foods, medicines, or in industrial arts. Photographs and drawings, almost all of which were especially made to illustrate this work, appear in abundance. These illustrations, while having to do almost entirely with taxonomic features, are so excellent that they constitute one of the most pleasing and satisfactory parts of the book.

In the first chapter the author discusses the palms. At least thirteen genera are grown in the African colonies, producing large quantities of food material for local consumption and for commerce. Several of these also supply important textile materials and all are prominent features of the landscape. Another chapter is devoted to the description, cultivation, and preparation of tobacco for use. This is the most widely cultivated plant of the German colonies, being grown everywhere. Only the species *N. Tabacum* is extensively grown, *N. rustica*, which is so common in some other tropical countries, being scarcely known. The fungus parasites which induce diseases of this plant are numerous, and the way in which they affect the plant is equally varied. At the close of this chapter is appended a bibliography of the most important literature upon the subject. Many readers will regret that a similar appendix is not to be found with the other subjects.

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[3] SADEBECK, R.: Die Kulturgewächse der deutschen Kolonien und ihre Erzeugnisse. 8vo. pp. xiii + 366. *figs. 127.* Jena: Gustav Fischer. 1898, Brosch. *M* 10; geb. *M* 11.

The other twelve chapters of the book are not arranged with reference to any particular genus or group of plants, but with reference to certain economic products, as "Grains and sugars," "Edible fruits and vegetables," and "Eigentliche Genussmittel"—the coffee and tea group. The colonies produce many of the spices, and the number of plants yielding fats and oils is no less. Indigo, gums, caoutchouc, and gutta-percha are prominent among the products of the colonies. Twenty plants yield textile materials or useful woods. The number of medicinal plants grown is very small, and comparatively little space is given to the chapter which deals with these.

It is obviously the author's intention to deal merely with that part of economic botany which has to do with the useful plants; and those unfamiliar with this subject will be surprised to find that there are so many of these. Dr. Sadebeck expresses the belief that should the people of the German colonies, through the medium of such a book as he has written, become informed of the possibilities, the product from these plants, at present not large, would be very greatly increased. A comparison of the unused regions with those in which these plants are now grown shows that the cultivation has scarcely begun. The book is full of information and is worthy of the attention of every one interested in the inter-relationships of men and plants.—OTIS W CALDWELL.

The making of a daisy.[4]

TO POPULARIZE science is a worthy purpose, and it should be undertaken more by those who represent it. As the reviewer understands it, to popularize is to present the important facts in simple language, free from technicalities and with clear illustrations, in an attractive style, but never at the expense of accuracy. Judged by such a definition the book before us cannot be called a success, but it is a good type of its class. The author is well informed, but her contact with plants seems to be sentimental rather than scientific. To cultivate a sentimental affection for nature is delightful, but it should never be labeled science.

Certain facts about plants are taken, and most fanciful, not to say dreamy,

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[4] HUGHES-GIBB, ELEANOR: The making of a daisy; "wheat out of lilies;" and other studies in plant-life and evolution. A popular introduction to botany. 8vo. pp. 126. Charles Griffin & Co.: London, 1898.